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AUTHOR Root, Elaine H.
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ABSTRACT

To determine the effectiveness of past and existing programs in meeting the needs of homeless children, this study examined current research on problems facing homeless students and reviewed programs developed to meet the students' needs. Organizations dealing with issues of homelessness were contacted, and available sources in print were analyzed. Programs serving homeless students were examined in terms of funding, emphasis of intent. and location of services. The study investigated whether privately or publicly funded programs have greater flexibility to meet the needs of the homeless. An examination of programs indicated that privately funded programs were more sensitive to the needs of homeless students due to increased flexibility, reduced protocol, and confidentiality of records. All effective programs for homeless students addressed the needs of reduced self-esteem and diminished trust. On-site segregated classrooms addressed the emotional needs of the homeless more effectively than did regular mainstreamed classrooms. To increase the effectiveness of existing and future programs, more comprehensive follow-up studies of academic and affective development are recommended. (MM)

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EDUCATIONAL RESPONSES TO ISSUES OF SELF-ESTEEM AND TRUST IN HOMELESS STUDENTS

Research Paper
Presented to Dr. Wesley Earp
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in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for

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For the Degree of
Master of Education

By

Elaine H. Root

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CHAPTER I

WHERE CAN NEEDS BEST BE MET?

Homelessness is a problem that has existed since man began to live in homes. Public response to homelessness has been mandated since Moses's Exodus. The nature of homelessness and the character of the homeless changes over time. Within the past ten years a new and growing faction of the homeless has presented a special concern for educators. Homeless families now comprise an estimated 25-40% of all homeless and the number is growing. It is estimated that 18.2-19.7% of that number is comprised of children between the ages of birth and seventeen years of age. These children suffer from grief, loss, and a loss of self-esteem and trust that compound the problems of academic achievement that irregular attendance causes.

In an attempt to address these needs public policies have had to be changed, new laws have been passed, and efforts have been made to design special programs for these children. Some of these have been publicly funded, some privately funded, and some are a combination of both. Philosophically, some feel that segregated programs best meet the needs of homeless children while others feel these children are more successfully educated when they are integrated into regular classrooms.

Statement of the Problem

This study has examined current research on the problems facing homeless students and some of the programs which have been developed to meet these needs.

Purposes of the Study

The issues of self-esteem and trust, their influence on academic achievement, and how programs addressed these issues were central to this study. The intent of the study was to discover how the myriad and pressing needs of this population were best met. In order to

accomplish this, many organizations who deal with the issues of homelessness were contacted, interviews were conducted, and any available sources in print were analyzed. From this information the researcher intended to reach a conclusion concerning the most effective approach to educating homeless children.

Research Questions

As a means of structuring this study the following questions will be examined:

1. Are the needs of homeless students better met in publicly funded or privately funded programs?
2. Do programs for homeless children address the needs of reduced self-esteem and diminished trust?
3. Are the needs of homeless students better addressed in integrated or segregated classrooms?

Definition of Terms

Conventional dwellings-Homes, apartments, mobile homes, rented rooms (Rossi, 10)

Unconventional dwellings-Any structure that is not intended to be used as a sleeping place, including areas such as bus stations or lobbies, abandoned buildings, dormitory arrangements (as in shelters), cars, vans, trucks, and scrap material shack (Rossi, 10)

Precariously housed-Persons who have a tenuous hold on housing of the lowest quality (Rossi, 9)

Transitional homeless-Persons in transition between one living arrangement and another, but who have long-term potential to connect with the conventional housing market (Rossi, 50)

Reside-Broadly interpreted to mean physical presence with intent to remain for an indefinite period of time. Does not imply permanence. (Texas Education Agency, 6)

Homelessness-The condition of not having customary and regular access to a conventional dwelling, and residing instead in emergency shelters, on the street, or in makeshift accommodations such as the lodgings of friends, shanty structures, in unused space, cars, public parks, etc. The term usually applies to those who do not rent or own a residence and have no fixed address. (Rossi, 10, McCarthy, 48)

Homeless-An undomiciled person

1)without a fixed and regular address which assures them of thirty days sleeping quarters which meet minimal health and safety standards

2)who requires special assistance to secure permanent and stable housing

3)who has a primary nighttime residence in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter for temporary accommodations including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. (Rossi, 10 Hopper, 47 Chauvin,1)

Homeless shelters-Centers that offer temporary housing for homeless individuals, families, or people who are active substance abusers. These shelters are often funded by local churches, departments of public welfare, or private organizations. They usually offer meals and board to their guests. Guests are expected to search for permanent housing while staying in the shelter. (Tower, 36)

Family shelters-Centers that house only families-women and children, intact families, or pregnant women. Family shelters deal with housing issues, parenting, housekeeping, nutritional and budgeting issues. They also advocate for the homeless children in their area through the school system. (Tower, 36)

Homeless children and youth-Schoolage individuals with or without parents and/or adults who

1)lack a fixed, regular, and adequate residence

2)primarily reside in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter for temporary accommodation (including runaway youth shelters and domestic violence shelters)

3)reside in an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, adopted, placed in foster care, or other placement

4)reside in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, such as a car, a tent, or abandoned building

5)sleep in the streets

6)sleep in the home of a friend or relative or otherwise double up in accommodations with others. Typically, their situation denies them their basic needs and human rights. (Honig, 1, Shear,2, Texas Education Agency, 1)

Schoolage-In Texas, individuals who are over the age of five years and under the age of twenty-one years on the first day of September of any scholastic year. Schoolage exceeds those limits whenever the district offers services to children younger or older than the required ages. State Board of Education Rule 89.220(a) requires that special education services be available to handicapped three and four year olds. State Board of Education Rule 89.220(b) requires that special education services be available to visually impaired and hearing impaired children from birth.(Texas Education Agency, 2)

Segregated classrooms-Classrooms whose populations consist only of homeless children

Integrated or mainstreamed classrooms-Educational situations in which homeless students are included in the classrooms with other domiciled students.

Limitations of the Study

Findings and conclusions of this study must be viewed in light of the following limitations:

1. The population being studied is transient and mobile, making longitudinal study difficult.
2. The attention to educational issues of homeless children is recent and most programs are still in the formulative stages, so research on effectiveness is not readily available.
3. Evidence of loss of self-esteem or trust is not easily quantifiable.
4. Published information is scarce, so in order to obtain information on more than a local basis, it was necessary to go to primary sources. Time and expense limitations therefore impeded the search.
5. Some programs were awaiting publication of information about their programs, and were therefore reluctant to share information.
6. Some programs, claiming time and financial resource limitations, were only willing to dispense limited amounts of information.
7. Programs were understandably biased toward their own approach, therefore objective data was difficult to obtain.
8. Some research was done with a limited population, so the data cannot reliably be generalized to the whole population of homeless families.
9. Teacher feedback was not available for the publicly funded integrated classrooms.

CHAPTER II

Programs for Education of the Homeless

The problem examined in this study was to discover some of the pressing problems of the homeless and to examine programs which have attempted to address these needs. Three questions were to be addressed in this study. The researcher attempted to examine whether publicly or privately funded programs were more effective in meeting affective and academic needs. The study examined in particular how programs responded to issues of self-esteem and trust in students. The last question was concerned with whether segregation of students in separate classrooms or integration into regular classrooms was a more effective approach to the special needs of homeless students.

The earliest mention the researcher found to a community's obligation to care for the homeless was in Deuteronomy 10:18. The problem of homelessness can therefore be considered one of long standing. Much of the treatment of the poor transient was based on Elizabethan Poor Laws, which assessed taxes for relief of their need. The fear of the transient or vagrant also derived from English historical fear of the traveling gypsy bands (Crouse, 12). Based on the theories of the "worthy and unworthy" poor, any able-bodied person that was not self-supporting was assumed to have a "flaw" in his character that was responsible for his poverty and that of his family (Crouse, 129). This led to the fourteenth century formula of punishing vagrancy, instead of looking for its cause. The policy was "How can we get rid of the transient at the least cost and trouble to the community." (Crouse,32).

The homeless were historically regarded with indifference, contempt, fear, and loathing. In seventeenth century America communities were only responsible for members of their own community. Therefore, communities denied settlement rights to those who might be a "tax burden", such as disabled or aged transients, widows, and children.

Throughout the nineteenth century, due to a general lack of a social welfare safety net, almost every household had a good chance through unemployment, illness, and death of becoming impoverished and homeless (Rossi, 20). Crouse record that the first programs to aid New York City's vagrant street children was organized in 1852 (p. 77). In 1856, the New York State legislature appointed a committee to investigate the poorhouses where the inmates were herded together indiscriminately, regardless of age or sex (Crouse, 34).

In the years following the Civil War, the economic and social changes prompted by industrialization and urbanization increased the problems of poor relief (Crouse,35). Economic panics in the 1870s and 1890s added massive numbers of unemployed to the ranks of the dispossessed. It was during this time that aid societies began to form professional organizations, specialized technology, training, and ideologies. During the 1870s some states began to have children removed from the poorhouses and almshouses to more specialized institutions or foster homes. This often meant separation from the parents. The Children's Aid Society placed 75,000 homeless children in homes "out west" over thirty-six years in the late nineteenth century. Many children; however, remained in almshouses, which housed poor widows, orphans, syphilitics, criminals, lunatics, and the infectiously ill (Dear, 38).

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, economic fluctuations periodically caused unemployment and reformers worried about "indiscriminate alms-giving" which would encourage social parasitism (McCarthy, 47). What benefits were offered were only for the settled, not the transient, poor. The policy was to return the transient to their home community for aid. The New York State policy stated, "unless these aliens and non-residents are returned promptly, they are likely to become permanent dependents of the state" (Crouse, 34). The only evidence of an educational interest in the children of the homeless during this period of worldwide economic fluctuation was the development, by a private philanthropic group, of Dr. Maria Montessori's Casa dei Bambini as a part of a homeless housing development in Italy in 1893 and 1896.

During the depressed years of 1907-1908, the number of poor overtaxed the system and the poor were in the streets (Crouse,40). Finally, in 1929, the first laws with sections for the

specialized concerns of the blind, children, veterans, and the elderly were passed with a new emphasis on serving this clientele (p.41). The new policy stated, "As far as possible families shall be kept together, and they shall not be separated for reasons of poverty alone." An attempt was also made to keep the poor in their homes (p.42).

With the crash in 1929, jobs were lost, no new ones existed, savings ran out, mortgages were foreclosed, homes were lost, and the hospitality or friends and relatives was strained by weeks and months of distress. Individuals and then families took to the road (p.47). With the depression, a change of public attitude occurred. These were not vagrants, vagabonds, tramps, and thieves. These were believers in the pioneer lore of the past, seeking a better life somewhere beyond the horizon.

The 1930s saw a new kind of homelessness emerge. Suddenly families were reporting for assistance to the aid societies. Local homeless families in New York were cared for through cash relief payments. Women and children could be sheltered five days, which was renewable, if needed. Transient homeless families were ineligible for local relief funds.

Public assistance consisted mainly of institutionalized, sex-segregated shelters,which separated families. The private sector operated shelters with concern for individual needs. The Traveler's Aid Society in New York City operated Guest Houses complete with playgrounds and social workers who assessed client's needs. The Salvation Army's Emergency Home for Women and Children was designed to provide protection, encouragement, and security (Crouse, 84). Personnel from private agencies contributed their time and expertise as members of the National Committee on Care of the Transient and Homeless. This private organization was the only national group that served the homeless (p. 85).

In 1933, William Church Border, president of the Children's Aid Society, who worked with transient boys, said, "The time has come when the Children's Aid Society can no longer bear the full burden for the care and training of these boys and I must therefore appeal to the public to help support this work." (p. 134) There is no record of such aid from the public sector.

Families were a problem in the transient programs. Shelters separated them, so most took to the road, looking for an opportunity to reestablish themselves with jobs, homes, and community. Unfortunately,the danger existed that their wandering might become permanent, and that children would come to accept as normal their parent's unconventional behavior (p.192). Of the 30,000 workers on commercial truck farms in New York a "very considerable" number were children, more susceptible to malnutrition, accidents, and plant poisoning (p.254). The psychological effect of this lifestyle was a generation of habitual migrants. It was hoped that schooling would reverse the process, but the day-to-day struggle for existence and the real need for their income to support the family led to sporadic attendance in school for these migrant children (p. 255). For these children, crowded and unsanitary living conditions and an absence of educational facilities were "stepping stones to future disaster" (p. 256).

Economic events in the 1960s and 1970s sent many workers in the Northeastern United States to the "Sunbelt" cities in search of work. In 1968, President Johnson recommended 6,000,000 housing units be built to accommodate the undomiciled or precariously housed. Less than half of these were built. 203,113 units were constructed while President Carter was in office, and 55,000 under President Reagan (Rossi, 198). By the end of the 1970s homeless families began to appear at welfare offices asking for help obtaining shelter (p. 35). In most cities, this was provided by private charities. To accommodate families, new types of shelter arrangements were created, with semi-private quarters for family groups.

In the 1980s, the cost of rent increased faster than inflation, forcing more families to "double up" (McCarthy, 52). The divorce rate doubled so that by 1982, one half of all black and one sixth of all white children were living in single parent households, most below poverty levels (p. 51). The heaviest use of shelters is reported to be by these young homeless women, who are heading homeless families (Rossi, 137). The Northeast and North Central industries suffered deindustrialization at the same time the petroleum industry declined, causing widespread unemployment. The majority of these unemployed workers are between 30 and 40 years of age, a result of the post World War II "baby boom", saturating the employment market (p. 120).

Across the country, young children reputedly constitute the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population (Dear, 203). The municipal government has been the expected source for the ongoing needs of the homeless to be met, once they are sheltered. This includes the educational needs of the children. Residency requirements, limited transportation facilities, and other restrictive policies have prevented effective service. In 1987, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act which appropriated funds to states which developed programs to address the needs of the homeless. Among the needs to be addressed was the education of homeless children.

This study examined programs across the country that addressed the educational needs of homeless children. The Traveler's Aid's "School with No Name" in Salt Lake City, Utah is on the premises of the shelter. The Santa Clara, California School District operates a classroom on shelter premises, funded by the county. First Place, in Seattle, Washington, is a private, non-profit organization. It relies on donations of time, money, and items from business, foundations and corporations. The program recently became part of the Seattle School District's Interagency Program, which provides certified teaching staff and bus service during the school year.

The Gene P. Tone Project School, in Tacoma, Washington is funded by a partnership between the privately funded YWCA and the public funds of the Tacoma School District. In Minneapolis, the homeless are taught in classrooms supported by public school funds. San Diego's Harbor Summit School is a publicly funded facility operated by the county with county-certified teachers, funded by state funds. A program in Tucson provides a public housing stipend for homeless youth who stay in school. New York City's board of education funded a program of services to address the educational needs of homeless students. Dallas Independent School District provides for education of homeless students in the public schools, operating with privately funded shelters and day care programs to provide services.

There are more than educational needs to be addressed in serving the children of the homeless. An examination study conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics from April 1971-June 1974 found the homeless are more likely to become depressed and demoralized

(Rossi, 150). In a recent survey of homeless children seen in a New York City hospital clinic, 44% exhibited aggressive behavior, hyperactivity, and signs of depression, as compared to 6% of low income children seen (Haus, 32). Stability is an important element in the social and emotional development of school-age children and adolescents. Maintaining continuity in school is one of the biggest issues for these children. One solution is for the parent to transport the child back to the former school. The Peekskill District does this by means of taxis. Reportedly, the students hate the stigma of riding the welfare taxis (Jackson,27). The stress of long bus rides, homework in crowded motel rooms and no organized after-school activities is creating a class of listless and depressed people. "These children are more prone to academic, physical, and psychological problems because of the situations they're in," according to Donald S. Pickett, superintendent of Peekskill City Schools (Jackson, 26). Often the child simply does not attend school.

Parents under stress, lacking support and assistance, have difficulty coping with the needs and demands of children. These conditions can contribute to child neglect and abuse. Instances of abuse and neglect among homeless families in New York City were found to be four times more frequent than in other low-income families (Haus, 32).

Schooling that has been delayed or disrupted by frequent moves or by long waits while school records are transferred, coupled with the stigma of homelessness are instrumental in the lack of success homeless students experience. 53% of the students in a recent Massachusetts study of school-age children were failing or doing below-average work, 43% had already repeated a grade, and 25% were in a special class (Fox, 148).

An interim report to Education Daily, including responses from 37 states, indicated a need for support services to help homeless students cope with the psychological effect of being homeless (Darden, 2). In most places, children must attend the school nearest the shelter and are labeled "hotel kids" or "shelter kids". Dr.. Bassuk, assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard, in her report of 151 children in shelters reports, "The kids are ashamed and

embarrassed." (Jackson, 20). A major reason reported for homeless children's failure to attend school was teasing by classmates (Darden, 2).

School can provide these children with a safe, stable environment; attention; and education, but it may not be enough. According to Bassuk, "Children come to shelters with a history of failing school, and rather than being helped, they get into a situation with fewer supports." Half of the children in her study suffered developmental delays, anxiety, and depression; one fourth of them requiring psychiatric treatment (Jackson, 20). One teacher expressed this fear, "When they get to be adults, they will be very angry people." NEA calls public response to the plight of the homeless children child neglect. Because of a lack of stability and routine, teachers observe learning disabilities that they feel are the result of the trauma of homelessness. These students are disruptive, often truant, and haven't learned "the rules of the game" (Weiss, 10).

For the school-age homeless population, evidence suggests that 50-66% need psychiatric assistance, displaying symptoms of depression which include attempted suicide and high levels of anxiety. Due to decreased parental ability to parent, homeless children are subject to both physical and emotional abuse and lack of opportunities to develop interpersonal and social skills to ensure their overall social and emotional development and survival. They exhibit a diminished sense of self and of their future. (Axelson, 466).

Feelings of confusion, helplessness, and being out of control are common to homeless children. In some children stress gives rise to physical symptoms (Tower, 18). Some homeless children perceive their parent's inability to cope with the present situation and learn survival skills in order to care for their parents. As a result of the lifestyle and poor diet children and youths may be listless and withdrawn. Depression is common, and manifested as fatigue, which is a result of insufficient sleep, inconsistent routines, and anxiousness over the future. Depression and stress may be translated into hyperactivity, an inability to stay within the structure of rules, and aggressive, hostile behavior (p. 19). Schools have different rules, different expectations, and different personalities. Students develop a support system among their peers that a new

student doesn't have. Instability breeds anxiety and a lack of trust. Homeless students find it difficult to make friends. They are reluctant to warm up to or cooperate with teachers (26). Barriers such as gaps in knowledge or skills due to registration difficulties, differences in curriculum, lifestyle instability, hunger, fatigue, lack of privacy, or learning problems can augment feelings of failure.

Hiding the condition of homelessness creates isolation from peers and may develop into self-blame (29). Children who are having difficulty with their peers, who are isolated and perceive themselves to be different, who have feelings of failure and little sense of stability will probably not feel good about themselves. Their parents' negative self-concept is translated into the child's self-image. These students should be encouraged to recognize and express their feelings so that others may understand them.

Families displaced from their homes through the occurrence of a major event are traumatized. Most of their possessions are gone, either destroyed or placed in storage. They have been suddenly uprooted form the community where they had friends and relatives. This displacement can leave family members feeling overwhelmed, vulnerable, and powerless, and in a state of shock. An emergency housing situation that continues the trauma may intensify those feelings (Simpson, 21). Leaving homes, pets, friends, belongings for an uncertain future may result in anxiety, depression, and diminished self-esteem (Chauvin, 3). The adjustment to loss is comparable to the grief process experienced with death. These feelings of loss and separation, with accompanying anxiety and emotional problems have long-term effects. The behavior that may result from these feelings may be unacceptable in the classroom. Bewilderment and fear are increased by new teachers and classmates. Young children, especially, have a hard time dealing with loss. Their limited cognitive ability to go through the grief process may mean they fixate on these initial feelings.

The school experience may be difficult because children are inappropriately placed when school districts do not receive full records. Children with special needs may get placed in regular classes and fall behind. They become frustrated and may act out aggressively or experience a

deepening sense of failure and become depressed. Records transferral is cited as one of the major obstacles to the education of homeless children. The results of no records or incomplete records is that children must often go through redundant child study team evaluation, adding to the feeling of stigma and interfering with classtime. Some children don't get assessed because the districts don't know how long the child will remain in the districts, and the process of evaluation may be time consuming. Studies indicate that students who are homeless are frequently kept back because they've missed content, not because they are incapable of doing the work. If they're kept back they have to deal with another kind of stigma. Some children are also behind due to cultural and social deprivation. Teacher's attitudes toward transient students reflect reduced expectations (Shelly, 24). This in conjunction with peer rejection, works to reduce self-esteem.

Data indicate that homeless children's physical and emotional health are at risk. In an interview, a teacher at the Vogel Alcove, a YWCA center for homeless children in Dallas, said that homeless children either trust no one and isolate themselves, or trust everyone indiscriminately in a search for acceptance and affection. "The children at highest risk go with anyone," she claimed.

The programs examined in this study were scrutinized to see if they directly addressed the issues of diminished self-esteem and trust. First Place in Seattle addresses emotional, developmental, and stress-related problems. An on-site counselor provides individual and group counseling and works with staff to identify and deal with a wide range of emotional and social problems (First Place, 2). Staff at First Place report that they must first teach the child to trust them. The decision to maintain a segregated classroom was in direct response to the decreased self-esteem that students experience in a regular classroom. According to the philosophy, there is reduced stigma when everyone is homeless (Berger, 5).

Connie Iverson reports that her program at the Eugene P. Tone School in Tacoma, Washington also maintains a homogenous classroom in order to allow students an open forum to discuss feelings and problems without stigma. She reports the children enter with low self-

esteem and "no trust". According to Gene Tone, programs must address children's problems in the order of Maslow's hierarchy. "You have to deal with survival and physical needs first, then with social and emotional issues, and then work up to self-esteem." (Harrington-Lueker, 17). In this homogenous environment teachers work to boost self-esteem and give the children strategies to cope with their situation when they enter the regular classroom. "The reality is," said Ms. Iverson, "kids are cruel." The hope is that the children will be better able to deal with that cruelty when they leave the Eugene P. Tone School (Iverson, 1990).

Dr.. Elmira Hendrix in Minneapolis reports surprisingly few signs of negative self-esteem in her program. She attributes that to the fact that her program works with a limited population of families in transition at the People Serving People Shelter, who haven't been homeless long enough to impact their self-esteem. She finds children are resilient, especially the very young, who have the stability of parental presence. The program does rapid assessment and works with the child to maintain academic skills in order to maintain a positive self esteem through successful academic endeavor. One aspect of the program that helps prevent loss of self-esteem is the rapidity of placement in subsidized housing. Most families are placed in two to three weeks. The goal of Dr.. Hendrix's program is therefore to keep the students from regressing and to continue their education while they await placement. The program finds that if the children's needs are met, self-esteem is not negatively impacted by homelessness. If isolated from the family or in foster care, there is more effect on self-esteem. In the classroom, low self-esteem is usually found to be expressed by aggression. The teachers deal with it by organizing games, group activities, and play situations in which the children assist each other. Role play to define situational responses and instruction in good manners help children develop acceptable social behaviors (Hendrix, 1990).

Teachers in shelter schools in San Diego, Salt Lake City, and Tacoma report one big advantage in having homogenous classrooms is that when all children are homeless, none are stigmatized and children can build up some self-confidence before moving to a regular school. The criteria for admittance into the Harbor Summit School in San Diego included low self-

esteem. Volunteers, such as foster grandparents, help students catch up on skills they may have missed during absences from school, in order to increase the students' confidence. Salt Lake City's "School with No Name" uses individualized teaching to relieve the pressure to keep up and conform. It is a separate classroom at the shelter, formed in order to lessen the disruption and crowding of classrooms caused by the constant influx of homeless children. Attendance is therefore practically ensured by the on-site location (Ely, 23).

The City Park Elementary School is the model for the Dallas Independent School District's educational plan for the homeless, which is being considered as a model for the programs in the state. City Park School homeless students arrive from three shelters located close to the school. Two of these shelters are publicly operated barrack-like mass facilities and the other is privately operated and provides one room per family for a period of thirty days. Approximately 10% of the school population is homeless, 70% is Hispanic, and 20% is black. This is an inner-city, crime-ridden, semi-industrial area. Therefore, poverty is not stigmatizing, but self-esteem and trust are issues for the entire school population. Physical and psychological safety are at risk for all students. Parents of all students are encouraged to walk their children to school. Children develop a close relationship with neighborhood police, who are called by their first names and spend time in the school building every day, frequently eating lunch with the students. Teachers are trained in positive discipline techniques and shelter parents attend parenting classes at the shelter that espouse this discipline philosophy. The NEA monograph, Homeless Students recommends a peer guide for homeless students to help them enter a trust relationship (Tower, 26). At City Park, a classmate is assigned to orient the student for one week. To provide psychosocial support for homeless students, the counselor provides group sessions and individual counseling for homeless students on a bi-weekly basis. The principal and school staff meet weekly to discuss students who are "at risk". The principal, nurse, counselor, Chapter I community liaison agent, a teacher representative and district psychologist discuss a child's weekly progress and plan appropriate interventions and evaluations. On a weekly basis teachers select three students who have done outstanding work in the area of

reading, writing, or math. Students are recognized over the P.A. and receive coupons that can be exchanged for school supplies or books. Every six weeks students in grades 1, 2, and 3 set objectives for raising low grades. Honor roll assemblies recognize A and B students as well as students who had perfect attendance. Profiles of progress are posted outside each classroom (Gonzalez, 4).

The Dallas Independent School District works with sixteen area privately-funded shelters for the homeless, with programs for the homeless in ten public schools. School district records show a pattern of cooperation and successful address of emotional issues. Interviews with other agency personnel indicate some dissatisfaction with the district's response to the needs of the homeless.

The latest debate in homeless education is whether programs should be in segregated classrooms, either on-site in shelters or located in separate facilities nearby, or integrated into the regular public school classrooms. Advocates of segregation say that special centers offer an advantage because all the children are homeless, so none are stigmatized. Child advocacy groups have argued that shelter schools cut children off from the mainstream, limit socialization, and institutionalize homelessness (Leslie, 51). One issue is that separate schools may offer unequal amounts of services to their clients. Marilyn Treshaw, a teacher at Salt Lake City, points out that her students do not have a library, computer, music, physical education, or special education classes. She says, "We're separating kids by economic status-discriminating against poor kids." (Weiss, 10).

Though centers in San Diego, Salt Lake City, Tacoma, New York, Chicago, Santa Clara, and Washington D.C. have shelter schools they claim are successful, Anita Beaty, co-director of the Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless, claims that these compensatory schools rob children of their right to a public education. Bill Bolling, an Atlanta advocate for the homeless, opposes isolation for children who already feel they're left out of the mainstream (Thomas, 14A).

Most shelters are run by religious organizations, which also brings up church-state separation issues and whether or not the schools can qualify for state and federal educational

funds while on church property. The Harbor Summit School has changed locations once due to that question.

Supporters and teachers at schools for the homeless claim that they are trying to add stability to the children's lives. Salt Lake City's teacher, Stacey Bess says, "I feel we're simply helping these kids regroup." The main thrust of these center-based programs may not always be academic. According to Mrs. Bess, "You can't always teach the kids all the academics, but you can give them that thirst for learning. You can let them know someone does care." (Thomas, 14A). These programs offer stability, stress self-esteem and tackle emotional and mental problems that most public schools aren't prepared to deal with. It is easier to learn when homelessness doesn't engender guilt or stigma. These programs are only intended to offer temporary educational and emotional support while families are in transition, usually for 6 weeks to 180 days. Recent studies confirm that homeless students, lacking motivation and self-esteem, usually perform poorly in public schools and many, therefore, avoid school.

Atlanta and Dallas both use public school programs. Both cities have public schools close to downtown shelters. Georgia State University's Center for Public and Urban Research recently released a report, however, that stated homeless children may need more educational instruction than the amount normally provided during the typical school day. Dr.. Ellouise Collins, director of the Georgia Department of Education's Division of Compensatory Education, responded to that charge, "I definitely don't think separate schools for homeless kids is the answer. But I'll be the first to admit we've got to do something or we're going to lose an entire generation." (Thomas, 14A).

Harbor Summit School's Everett McGlothlin maintains that he can see the positive results of that program. One of the teachers, Ms. Wooten, points to a now successful student who began school at Harbor Summit with academic and emotional problems and says, "I don't think a regular public school could have dealt with him." (Thomas, 14A) Critics of public school education for the homeless say that many behaviors are diagnosed as Attention Deficit Disorders

and children are labelled as learning disabled when they are not organically affected (SACUS, 1990).

New York City's plan calls for homeless children to be continued in an integrated setting at a school of the parent's choice (Ely, 27). New York's Board of Education funded a program to register and place the approximately 6,000 school-age homeless children living in welfare hotels (Jackson, 23). However, Jody Spiro, an executive assistant to Schools Chancellor Nathan Quinones, reports that board officials scrapped a computerized plan to match Human Resources Administration records of hotel children with their school records. The central board never properly organized its family workers and attendance teachers to follow up on children who register, but then drop out. Promised paraprofessionals have not been assigned to ride the school buses and maintain order. These employees were to ensure safety and take attendance. Although funds were allocated, afterschool programs were never organized (p. 24).

Critics of separate schools say these programs isolate and remove from the mainstream, but caregivers who work with the homeless point out that these students have potentially been in three schools in as little as 45 days and need a chance to rebuild their confidence in a protected environment. Rather than being put directly into a structured full day academic setting, they may require a chance to work through their grief and reduce their levels of stress. During the period of transition they need a chance to develop support, gain strength, and strengthen their self-concept. The Harbor Summit School, for example, has academic involvement for only three-and-a-half hours a day. The Minneapolis program has enrichment in the morning and academics in the afternoon.

A separate issue in the case of segregated schools is the population of students who are in shelters for victims of domestic violence. Public school enrollment may mean a threat to the child's safety, since the abusive parent could discover the location of the family through school records (Chauvin, 2). All of the alternate schools examined listed this as one of their reasons for operating outside of regular public school classrooms. In addition, school-age children in family violence shelters who have been witnesses to or are victims of abuse have been shown to

exhibit restlessness and nervousness, poor academic performance, confusion because of differences in home and school environments, school phobia, anxiety, depression, disobedience, aggressiveness, and destructiveness (Hughes, 21). These children also demonstrated difficulty in concentrating which affected their school work (p. 22).

The cost of publicly funded segregated classrooms may be higher than regular classroom instruction. Harbor Summit offer roughly four times the adult attention per student as a regular public school, and receives about $4,500 per student from the state, compared to $3,800 a year for students in regular classrooms (Arner, A8).

The DISD approach at City Park Elementary is mainstreaming. This is viewed as successful. The school has consistently had a higher per cent of student objective mastery on the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills than the district average (Gonzalez, 9). Due to the "at-risk" status of most of the students at City Park, services are readily available for students with special needs. The school works with other agencies and organizations to provide special programs for its students.

The Santa Clara School District sought relief from the burden of educating the homeless. It approached the shelter and arranged to establish a one-room school, rented from the shelter for $1.00 a year and funded by the county.

This study investigated whether privately or publicly funded programs have greater flexibility to meet both the affective and academic needs of the homeless. The answer to that question depends on the source of the information. Privately funded programs claim they are better able to meet all needs, citing services such as clothing banks and social service workers as evidence. Many publicly funded programs make similar claims, pointing to the more complete program options of public schools. The New York City Program; however, is generally regarded by those in and out of its administration to be a failed public program. An historical examination of programs indicates the most humane and successful programs have been privately funded.

The second question asked by this study is whether programs for homeless students address the needs of reduced self-esteem and diminished trust. All of the programs examined listed these as a priority in their programs, except the Minneapolis program, which claimed that these were not pressing concerns in their particular program, but which did have provision for those needs in its plans. The New York City plan did not directly address these needs, focusing instead on administrative procedures and attendance problems.

The debate over integrated or segregated classrooms seems to indicate a more nurturant and successful environment in segregated programs. The City Park/DISD plan appears to be successful from all administrative records, but there is some criticism from observers and caregivers who work with the same clientele. These critics feel that a segregated program might be less stigmatizing for the children.

CHAPTER III

Effectiveness of Programs for Homeless Students

This study was intended to examine the effectiveness of past and existing programs to find which ones met the needs of the homeless most effectively. These programs were examined in terms of how they were funded, the emphasis of their intent, and the location of their services.

Findings

Based on the data presented in this study, the following findings were identified:

1. Historically, privately funded programs have been first to address the needs of the homeless. When compared to public programs, private organizations were generally more responsive and humane. With the current increase in homeless families, privately funded programs were the first to address the problems of homeless children, and generally operate effective programs. Publicly funded programs, especially programs funded through the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act are striving to meet the same needs, but are delayed by administrative protocol and required accountability.

2. Due to the overwhelming body of research that indicates homeless children have reduced self-esteem and trust levels, almost all programs stress the importance of developing self-concept and trust. Programs that did not directly address those issues in the materials researched should not necessarily be assumed to neglect those issues, since the research cannot be considered comprehensive.

3. Segregated classrooms for homeless children are usually located on or very near shelter premises, virtually assuring attendance. These programs avoid stigmatization, since all of the students are homeless. The staff are trained to work with the special problems of the homeless. There is not administrative delay to school admission or commencement of service. Academics are supplemented in order to reduce the effects of cultural and social deprivation. In addition, these schools may relieve the administrative burden and classroom disruption of the constant influx of homeless students from public schools. In cases of domestic violence, the segregated classroom offers greater security. Integrated classrooms, on the other hand, prevent isolation and maintain the student in the mainstream, have more reliable sources of funding, have greater resources for special needs students, have more complete programming, and do not raise church/state conflict issues which may cause funding conflicts.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Privately funded programs are more sensitive to the needs of the homeless student due to increased flexibility, reduced protocol, and confidentiality of records.

2. All effective programs for homeless students will recognize the primary importance of addressing the needs of self-esteem and trust development.

3. On-site segregated classrooms address the emotional needs of the homeless more effectively than regular mainstreamed classrooms. Academic progress in the segregated classrooms was not addressed or documented in the information researched. In the City Park TEAMS scores, the scores for the homeless are included in the general population scores, so it

is not possible to interpret academic success from those materials, either. Therefore, no conclusions are drawn on academic effectiveness.

Recommendations

1. The newly developed publicly funded educational programs for homeless children should examine the currently existing privately funded programs for effective policies.

2. Self-esteem and trust development should be included in the teacher training and curriculum of all programs that deal with homeless students.

3. When logistically feasible, on-site or segregated classrooms should be considered as an option for students who are considered to be temporarily "in transition".

4. Policies for public school enrollment should make provision for students from domestic violence shelters in order to ensure the emotional and physical security of children.

5. More comprehensive follow-up studies of the academic and affective development of students should be undertaken in order to increase the effectiveness of existing and future programs.

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